

HOT TOPICS

SUMMER 2001

CURRENT ISSUES FOR ARMY LEADERS

Risk

Management

Lives in Leaders' Hands

Commander's
Checklist

Five Steps of
Risk Management
Behind the Wheel

U.S. Army Soldier
Cause of death:
Lack of clear standards

Message from the Director of Army Safety

EIGHTY-SEVEN soldiers died during the first half of fiscal year 2001. They died in aircraft crashes, in their personal vehicles, in Army motor and combat vehicles, and even while engaged in physical training. Though labeled accidents, these were not merely chance events. They were breakdowns in managing risk.

Accidents are not a built-in cost of doing Army business. They are the results of us as leaders not taking the time to notice hazards, or potentially bad consequences turning deadly or destructive because they were carelessly overlooked or were left uncontrolled. Accident prevention is leaders' business.

The five-step risk management process in FM 100-14, "Risk Management," gives leaders the tools to protect their soldiers and equipment. Through risk management, leaders can pinpoint hazards and prescribe specific actions that either eliminate hazards or reduce the risk so that benefits outweigh potential costs.

No excuse is good enough when telling a wife, husband, mother or father that a loved one has died or been injured in an accident. If you think making time to talk about safety is wasted effort, think about facing a victim's family. How would you explain that a soldier in your unit was harmed because of a hazard you could have controlled?

Safety is not a reason for ignoring the mission, nor is it an extra, unnecessary step in our do-more-with-less climate. Through detailed attention to safety we perform more efficiently and push the respect for our soldiers' lives to the forefront of all that we do. May this issue of **Hot Topics** give you the instruction and confidence to save the lives and equipment in your hands.



BG Gene M. LaCoste
FORMER DIRECTOR OF ARMY SAFETY

• BG LaCoste is now the Assistant Director for Personnel.
BG James E. Simmons became the Director of Army Safety July 2.



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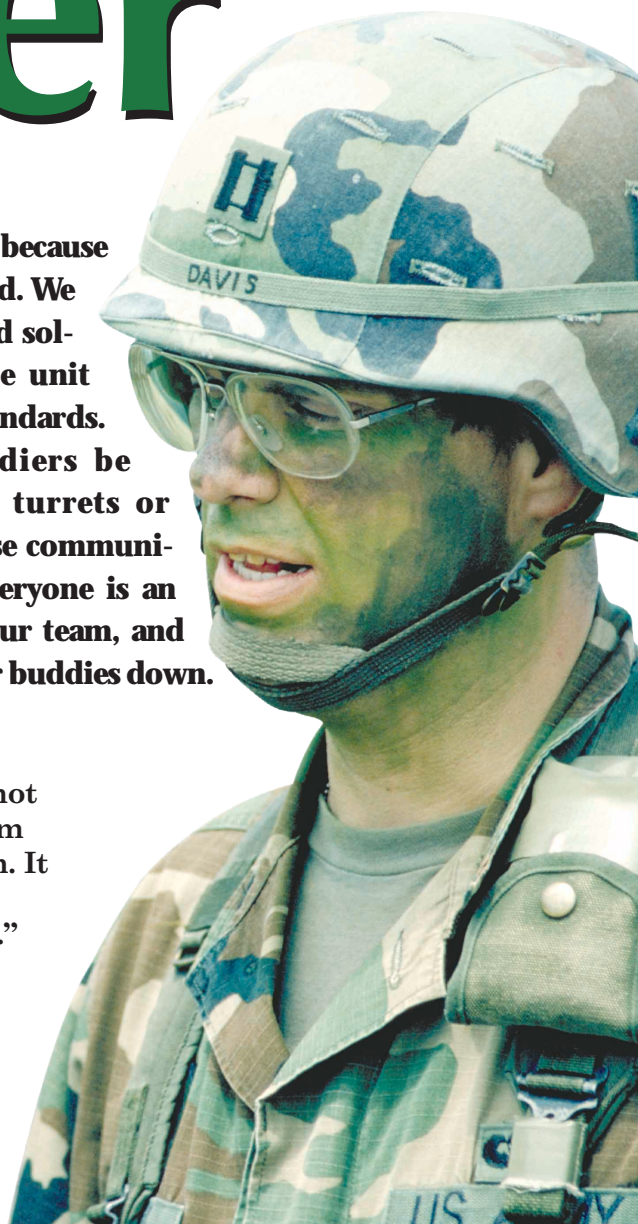


WE can't let trucks roll over because drivers were poorly trained. We can't let planes crash and soldiers burn because the unit didn't enforce the standards.

We can't let soldiers be crushed by tank turrets or between vehicles because communications broke down. Everyone is an important member of our team, and teammates don't let their buddies down.

"Risk management is not an excuse to keep from doing a tough mission. It is a tool to help us do tough missions safely."

— COL John Warren
Deputy Commander
U.S. Army Safety Center



Risk management — the process of identifying, assessing and controlling the hazards that put our people, equipment and missions at risk. A pattern of thinking.

Taking Chances

THE past reveals that we have two rivals: the enemy and ourselves. Almost 80 percent of our accidents — on the battlefield and at home — involve human error. These accidents kill more soldiers and wreck more equipment than the declared enemy.

One out of every five American soldiers killed in World War II died as a result of an accident. During the Korean War, more than half the Army personnel who were hospitalized were injured in accidents. And in Vietnam, accidents killed 5,700 soldiers, disabled more than 106,000 others and produced nearly 5 million nondisabling injuries.



On Duty

Information and task overload hint at the challenges our soldiers bear in today's fast-paced environment. Resources, weather, experience and continuous deployments are other challenges. Our reluctance to say "no" may also contribute to risks, as does soldiers' tendency to carry the load alone instead of asking for help when it's needed.

Off Duty

Despite the high risk that is sometimes considered inherent in military duty, soldiers are less likely to be killed in actual operations than in off-duty activities. More soldiers die in privately owned vehicle accidents than in any other category of accidents. **On average, the Army loses one soldier every three days in a POV accident.**

A Measure of Consequence

FATALITY and accident rates dropped in both ground and aviation operations during fiscal year 2000. Aviation fatalities and flight-accident rates fell to all-time lows, while FY 00 was the second-safest year ever in ground and privately owned vehicle fatalities.

	FY 99	FY 00
Aviation		
Aviation Class A accidents ^o	18	6
Aviation fatalities	22	4
Ground		
On-duty Class A accidents	43	43
Off-duty Class A accidents	133	133
On-duty fatalities		
Non-POV	31	23
POV	1	5
Off-duty fatalities		
Non-POV	11	21
POV	121	111

^o Class A accidents are those with \$1 million or more in damage, a fatality or a permanent total disability.



ALTHOUGH statistics herald the Army's improvement in risk management, **163 soldiers died** in fiscal year 2000 from risks that might have been eliminated with proper assessment and controls.

Army Field Manual 100-14, "Risk Management," dictates that every leader and commander is responsible for protecting soldiers from unnecessary risks. That responsibility applies to all Army missions, including mission security; morale and welfare; prevention of injuries before, during and after deployments; and avoidance of "friendly fire."

Fulfilling that obligation requires knowledge and experience — and some help. The U.S. Army Safety Center adopted the risk-management process to help leaders identify hazards and make informed decisions to control those hazards. While leaders are good at naming and recognizing hazards, they often fail to implement controls needed to eliminate or decrease risks, according to Safety Center deputy commander COL John Warren.

"Our junior leaders don't have the experience base to make informed risk-management decisions. Frequently, they lack a basic understanding of what right looks like," he said. "Young leaders often do not understand that the risk-management process is continuous, meaning that when you get to step five, 'supervise and evaluate,' you start over again at step

one, 'identify any new hazards that may now be present.'" In fact, he added, investigations often reveal that accidents originate days or months before the actual event.

Choosing ways to lessen risks is one of a leader's most critical and consequential roles. It starts with discipline, team coordination, by-the-book maintenance and enforced standards. Managing risks must be an intuitive part of everything leaders and soldiers do, Warren said. Soldiers' well-being must be every leader's priority, even if that means double-checking work and reminding soldiers of the standards they were taught just a week earlier. It might also mean pushing soldiers to think and act maturely.

"Young soldiers — ages 19 to 25, in the grades of E-1 to E-4 — have the most POV accidents. These soldiers think they are invincible and tend to underestimate their personal risk and overestimate their personal ability," Warren said.

The Army's accident rate was 10 times higher 25 years ago than it is today. Despite today's decreasing rates, leaders shouldn't ease their focus on safety or assume soldiers will do the right thing when life and equipment is at stake.

"Safety is fragile," Warren said. "If commanders don't keep the emphasis on safety and standards, then complacency and indiscipline set in."

Steps of Risk Management

Identify hazards — Identify hazards to people, property and mission. Consider all aspects of current and future situations, as well as historical problem areas.

Remember that conditions can change quickly, requiring constant vigilance.

The enemy is normally an obvious hazard. Consider also the:

- **complexity and difficulty of the mission;**
- **terrain and environment;**
- **weather and visibility;**
- **equipment;**
- **time available for execution;** and
- **supervision, experience, training, morale and endurance of the troops.**

Assess hazards — Determine the potential loss and cost that could result from the identified hazards, based on probability and severity. Probability determines the likelihood that the hazard may cause a problem. Severity asks: “How bad could it be?” Hazards are measured as extremely high risk, high risk, moderate risk and low risk.

Develop controls and make a risk decision — Develop courses of action that eliminate hazards or reduce their risks. Controls may range from hazard alerts and physical warning signs to issuing protective clothing or avoiding the hazard area altogether. After establishing controls, leaders should re-evaluate the hazards to check for residual risk and to ensure risks are reduced to a level at which benefits outweigh potential costs. Leaders should involve their chains of command if the level of risk exceeds their commanders’ guidance or necessary controls significantly reduce the chance of mission success. This step demands analysis, judgement and, sometimes, intuition.

Implement controls — Put into place controls that eliminate the hazards or reduce their risks. This may be done through verbal or written orders, standard operating procedures, performance standards, safety briefings and rehearsals. Ensure unit members clearly understand the controls.

Supervise and evaluate — Enforce the controls and evaluate soldiers’ understanding of the standards. Adjust and update standards as necessary.

Risk-Management Terms

Hazard — Any existing or potential condition that can cause injury, illness or death; damage to, or loss of, equipment and property; or degradation of the mission.

Risk — The chance of hazards or bad consequences; exposure to injury or loss. The risk level is expressed in terms of hazard probability and severity.

Probability — The likelihood that an event (loss) will occur:

- **Frequent** — Occurs often, continuously experienced.
- **Likely** — Occurs several times.
- **Occasional** — Occurs sporadically.
- **Seldom** — Unlikely, but could occur.
- **Unlikely** — Can assume it will not occur.

Severity — The expected result of an event (degree of injury, property damage or other mission-impairing factors):

- **Catastrophic** — Death or permanent total disability, major security failure, major equipment or system damage, severe environmental damage, mission failure.

- **Critical** — Permanent partial disability, temporary total disability in excess of three months, significant equipment or system damage, significant mission degradation or environmental damage, considerable security failure.
- **Marginal** — Minor injury, lost workdays, minor equipment or system damage, some mission degradation or environmental damage.
- **Negligible** — First aid or minor medical treatment; minor equipment or system impairment; little or no impact on mission accomplishment or the environment.

Exposure — The frequency and length of time that soldiers, equipment and the mission are subjected to a hazard.

Controls — Actions taken to eliminate hazards or reduce risks.

Risk Assessment — The identification and assessment of hazards (first two steps of the risk-management process).

Residual Risk — The level of risk remaining after controls have been implemented. Controls are altered until the residual risk is at an acceptable level or until it cannot be practically reduced further.



Commander's Checklist

CHANGE has so long been a part of Army business that we spend a lot of time just keeping up with the pace. Doing anything, anywhere, anytime, at any cost has become our cultural mindset. Sometimes we get so caught up in what we have to do that we forget about what we should do. By embracing risk management, we invest in readiness. More than ever before, our missions demand exact planning. With proactive leadership and teamwork, risk management can make our jobs easier and missions more successful.

Special Pull-Out

MAKING



Safety

A PART OF
EVERYTHING WE DO



- 6 Inject safety into everything the organization does: mission planning, preparation and execution.
- 6 Clearly articulate risk-management policies and goals, even if they are written into standard operating procedures.
- 6 Remember that failure to impose standards gives way to low standards that could result in accidents.
- 6 Teach all leaders and supervisors to regard the healthy lives of soldiers as a prerequisite to successful mission accomplishment.
- 6 Hold a brainstorming session for junior leaders to identify potential hazards and their risks. Include everything from degradation of job-specialty skills to macho attitudes to time constraints.
- 6 Adopt the buddy system to enforce water consumption, healthy eating, personal hygiene and rest. Monitor sickness, heat and cold injuries, and drinking and driving.
- 6 Remember that overloading soldiers physically, mentally or emotionally can interfere with mission accomplishment.
- 6 Use a chronological sequence when identifying hazards and assessing their risks. For example, consider all aspects of moving to a training site: road conditions, length of trip, weather, vehicle condition, driver experience, driver rest, day versus night driving, speed limits, cargo, congested areas, fuel points and supervision.
- 6 Continually re-evaluate hazards and their risks as missions and conditions change.
- 6 Assure supervisors and managers that the commander's counsel may be sought if needed.
- 6 Examine how subordinates manage risk and offer suggestions for improvement.
- 6 Review unit SOPs to ensure safety is built in.
- 6 Emphasize caution in driving, equipment maintenance and weapons handling.
- 6 Ensure that soldiers are qualified and licensed to operate the vehicles and equipment they use.
- 6 Ensure that personal protective clothing and equipment is inventoried, serviceable and available.
- 6 Give seasonal safety briefings to remind soldiers about holiday-related hazards.
- 6 Teach soldiers to make on-the-spot decisions in emergency situations that require immediate attention.
- 6 Ensure that accident-reporting requirements and procedures are understood.
- 6 Teach soldiers to be aware of their own limitations, as well as those of their units and leaders.
- 6 Help subordinates to learn from their mistakes.
- 6 Resist the temptation to take shortcuts.
- 6 Use the safety specialists assigned to the unit or installation.
- 6 Make safety references easily accessible.

THE STANDARD

THE standard for risk management is leadership at the appropriate level of authority making informed decisions to control hazards or accept risks. All leaders are responsible and accountable for assessing their operations as total systems. They must ensure that risk-management decisions match the mission and that control measures reduce the risks to a level that supports their commanders' guidance.

The degree of risk determines the level of authority at which a decision is made to accept that risk. When resources to control high risks are not available, elevate the issue to the next-higher command. This process continues until it reaches a level of command that has the resources and authority to eliminate hazards or to control them to an acceptable level. In this manner, a conscious and informed decision can be made to acquire and commit the resources to control hazards or accept risks.



“Army Chief of Staff GEN Eric K. Shinseki is adamant that he is the safety officer for the Army. He is equally adamant that each commander with a flag outside his or her office is the safety officer for that unit or organization.

“Shinseki has stated that: ‘Our business is a dangerous business, and command involvement is the key to our success. When I talk safety and why we are having problems, I talk to commanders.’

“His words reinforce to those of us who have accepted command responsibility that it is up to each of us to protect and ensure the safety of the human lives entrusted to our care.”

— BG Gene M. LaCoste
Former Director of Army Safety

The Rules

- **Accept no unnecessary risks.** Leaders with the authority to accept risk have the responsibility to protect their soldiers from unnecessary risks. An unnecessary risk is one that, if reduced or eliminated, still allows mission accomplishment.
- **Make risk decisions at the proper level.** Risk decisions should be made at a level consistent with the commander's guidance. The leader responsible for the mission should make the risk decisions, seeking the advice of the next-higher command if resources to control the hazards are unavailable.
- **Accept the risks only if benefits outweigh the costs.** Leaders must occasionally accept necessary risks to accomplish the mission. They must also understand that risk-taking requires a decision-making process that balances mission benefits with costs.

Potential Hazards

WHEN identifying hazards and assessing risk, look for:

- shortcomings in personnel, intelligence and logistical support;
- lack of clear standards or no standards at all;
- lack of or outdated training;
- poor leadership;
- lack of self-discipline; and
- lack of appropriate resources.

Profile of a Safety-conscious Leader

COMMANDERS should have strong management abilities, specific safety goals and extensive technical backgrounds in their areas of responsibility. Safety-conscious leaders know the common causes of accidents and which of their soldiers have high accident-risk factors. They give on-the-spot corrections, and do not tolerate below-standard performance.

Leaders who make safety a priority teach their soldiers to keep maintenance manuals current and easily accessible. No matter the mission or the environment, they do not accept excuses for ignoring routine maintenance. Leaders also establish training standards and afford time for hands-on practice. Quality is never sacrificed for quantity.



“Risk management helps us think in terms of when the next accident will happen. This is a huge leap in changing our Army culture.”

— Brigade commander

“To be part of the solution, soldiers have to think in terms of hazards and controls. We must anchor to standards and offer the commander options for informed risk-management decisions.”

— Training group deputy commander

“All soldiers must understand the military decision-making process and how to integrate risk management into it.”

— Infantry brigade commander





Reporting Accidents

ACCIDENT reporting helps safety experts identify hazard trends and prevent similar accidents. All accidents should be reported to the local safety office and to the immediate commander or supervisor whose operation, personnel and equipment are involved. Reports should include:

- ❑ the primary cause of the accident;
- ❑ contributing factors;
- ❑ factors not contributing but increasing the severity of damage or injuries; and
- ❑ factors not contributing but which could cause an accident in the future if left uncorrected.

Reporting instructions and forms are available under “Guidance” at <http://safety.army.mil>. Reporting guidelines are also available in Army Regulation 385-40, “Accident Reporting and Records.”

“We were able to deploy and redeploy a lot of troops and equipment over a two-year period without any major accidents by exercising risk management.”

— Area support group safety manager

“Risk management is our policy for every mission. It truly does work and is an important process with true relevance in our Army environment.”

— Brigade combat team commander

“There is no cold start; risk is a cumulative thing. Risk management must be a continuous process.”

— Infantry brigade commander

BEHIND the Wheel



MOST accident fatalities occur while soldiers are driving their own cars. Such needless deaths are preventable when leaders encourage safe driving habits and set an example of self-discipline and patience.

Leaders should set unmistakable standards that reflect traffic laws. Be uncompromising on the use of seatbelts and motorcycle safety equipment. Educate soldiers on the risks of speed, fatigue and alcohol use. Conduct mandatory POV safety inspections and random roadside checks. Also emphasize

the use of designated drivers for social events.

Since safety demands vigilant attention, leaders should persistently emphasize POV safety. Junior and noncommissioned officers see their soldiers every day. They should know where their soldiers go and what they do, and can assert positive influence on how, when and where their soldiers operate POVs.

Soldiers sometimes telegraph signals that translate later into accidents. Negative behaviors such as traffic offenses, alcohol abuse, misconduct and poor performance

are often indicators of potential POV-accident victims. Leaders must identify at-risk soldiers, then counsel and encourage them to change their risky behaviors.

Leaders can also eliminate the risks soldiers take by providing alternatives to driving POVs and giving incentives to keeping off the highway during weekends. Schedule activities on post. Establish liberal hours for gyms, recreation centers and other places that soldiers use after duty hours. Use similar measures to provide alternatives to alcohol use, and post public-transportation schedules in prominent places.

Following every POV accident or fatality, commanders should conduct an assessment of the accident with the involved soldier's chain of command. Determine what happened, why it happened and how it could have been prevented. Implement preventive measures. Publicize lessons learned.

Get the U.S. Army Safety Center's POV risk-management toolbox at <http://safety.army.mil/pages/tools/index.html>. The latest POV accident-prevention video, "Driver's Dozen," is available by going to <http://afishp6.afis.osd.mil/dodimagery/davis/> and clicking on PIN/ICN, then searching for PIN number 711416.

RESOURCES

U.S. Army Safety Center —

Gives commanders tools to integrate proactive risk management into their units' daily business. It offers training at unit locations and provides assessments (not inspections) that point out problems and suggest improvements. The center also has a comprehensive website with leader safety guides and risk-management tools at <http://safety.army.mil>.

A mobile training team teaches a 45-hour risk-management integration course to noncommissioned officers. The intent is to teach safety to NCOs, not produce safety NCOs.

In aviation safety, the center offers four six-week safety officer courses, two two-week aviation safety officer correspondence phase II courses, and one one-week refresher course per year. A 17-week resident safety-intern program offers more than 30 professional-develop-

ment courses, which are also available as refresher training.

Located at Fort Rucker, Ala., the Safety Center offers a help desk at helpdesk@safety.center.army.mil, or (334) 255-1390 or (DSN) 558-1390.

Field Manual 100-14, "Risk Management" — Helps leaders develop a framework to integrate risk management into planning, preparing and executing operational missions and everyday tasks.

Risk Management Chain-Teaching Packet — An instructional CD-ROM that includes PowerPoint training slides with scripts, plus 26 training scenarios that can be tailored to specific units and taught at both junior and senior levels. Emphasizes the Army's five-step process to identify and assess hazards and develop and implement controls to reduce risks.

Also includes POV inspection checklists and surveys that measure soldiers' knowledge. Packets are available at installation and unit safety offices.

<http://call.army.mil/products/newsletters/99-5/99-5toc.htm> — Outlines risk management responsibilities according to FM 101-5, "Staff Organization and Operations."

Flightfax and Countermeasure — Published monthly by the Safety Center, these magazines offer helpful tips and current information about risk management.

Installation staffs (including the safety office, provost marshal, and drug and abuse prevention and control office) — can provide assistance with local accident data and prevention measures.





Leaders Can Make a Difference

Soldiers' maturity and skill levels directly influence their ability to react to hazards — a task that typically becomes intuitive with age and experience. Because all soldiers develop at varying rates, leaders must adopt an encouraging, helpful approach while teaching soldiers to incorporate risk management into their lives. These goals can help soldiers develop a natural concern for their own safety and that of those around them:

- ⊙ Make safety a lifestyle.
- ⊙ Don't neglect or underestimate personal limitations. Everybody has them.
- ⊙ Keep a positive attitude. Negativity breeds complacency.
- ⊙ Make safety a priority, both on and off duty.
- ⊙ Be a buddy — look out for others.

BOTTOM LINE

Risk management helps us to safely perform tough missions.